



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/997,248	11/30/2001	Bodo Wiegand	740116-353	3740
22204	7590	12/16/2004		EXAMINER
				KIM, PAUL L
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
				2857

DATE MAILED: 12/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/997,248	WIEGAND, BODO
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Paul L Kim	2857

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 September 2004.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1,9,10 and 13-24 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 2-8,11,12 and 25 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 9, 10, and 13-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pan et al in view of Schleiss et al.

With regard to claims 1 and 13, Pan et al teaches a method of optimizing maintenance procedures comprising: analyzing a plant, improving the plant based on the analysis, modularizing maintenance procedures (fig. 1a), and using a control system for determining when maintenance standards deviate from predetermined objectives, and using a feedback system which is responsive to determination of the deviation for causing a systematic analysis of the situation to be performed and identified, implementing modification of the strategy and maintenance methods to achieve improvements and initiate plant optimization (abstract). Pan et al teaches analyzing a plant but does not specify analyzing an equipment. Schleiss et al teaches a method of diagnosis in which equipments are diagnosed and past maintenance histories are examined (abstract & fig. 1). Since Pan et al and Schleiss et al are both within the art of optimizing maintenance strategies and since plants consists of individual equipments, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to modify Pan et al, so that equipments are optimized, as taught by Schleiss et al, in

order to increase the versatility and capabilities of the system by being able to perform diagnosis in a wide variety of situations.

With regard to claims 9 and 10, Pan et al teaches improving the equipment based on the analysis by determining a short-term process to be applied to the results (fig. 1b, part 61).

With regard to claims 14 and 15, Pan et al teaches summarizing work (fig. 1a, part 56).

With regard to claims 16-18, 21, and 23, Pan et al teaches defining processes based upon existing servicing, auditing, analyzing, and optimizing the current processes, designing inter-function processes, standardizing the process elements, and describing the modules (fig. 1a, parts 52-56).

With regard to claims 19 and 20, Pan et al teaches documenting time schedules (col. 6, lines 61-67).

With regard to claim 22, Pan et al teaches improving quality and optimizing work (fig. 1a, part 56).

With regard to claim 24, Pan et al teaches standardizing process elements into models (col. 5, lines 48-51).

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 2-8, 11, 12, and 25 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

4. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Kim whose telephone number is 571-272-2217. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 10:00-6:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Marc Hoff can be reached on 571-272-2216. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9306 for regular communications and for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0956:

PK
December 12, 2004


MARC S. HOFF
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800